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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS



✓ ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

This is volume 3 in a series of nine booklets. The Assembly of Captive European Nations undertook the publication of the series in response to numerous demands. Also, since much of the existing literature on East-Central Europe has been written from the outsider's point of view, there seems to be a need for informative material bearing the stamp of authenticity and first hand experience. Each booklet has been prepared by experts of the respective National Committee.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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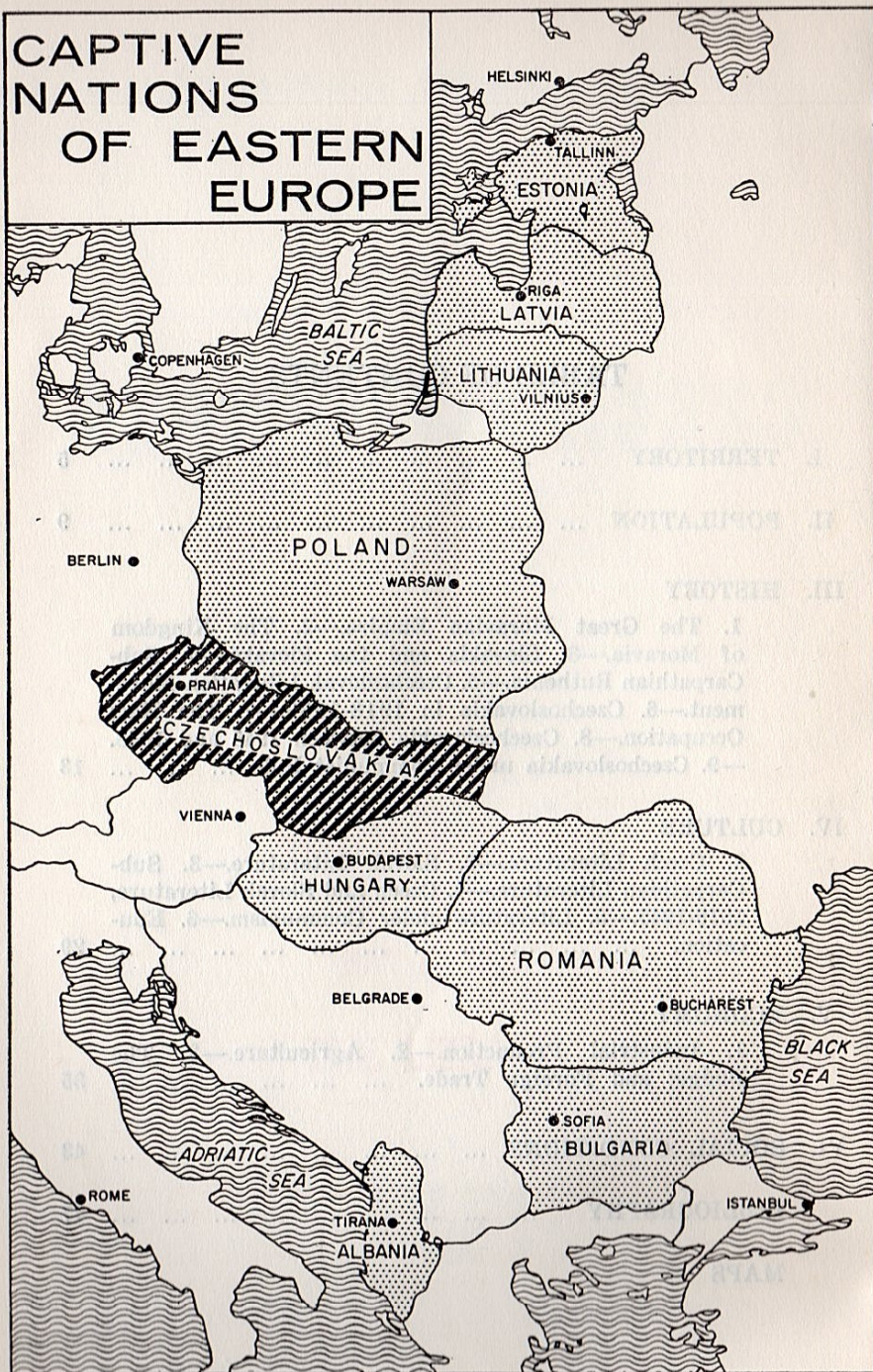
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I. TERRITORY

CZECHOSLOVAKIA, a Central European country, is situated between 47° 43' 55" and 51° 03' 26" northern latitude, and 12° 05' 33" and 22° 34' 20" eastern longitude. It covers 49,366 square miles and in size stands 14th among the European countries. It is bounded by Germany on the west and northwest, by Poland on the east and northeast, by Austria and Hungary on the south, and by the U.S.S.R. to the east.

The country now consists of three provinces: Bohemia, Moravia (with parts of Silesia), and Slovakia. The first two, known as the Czech lands, formerly comprised the Kingdom of Bohemia, while Slovakia was a province of the Kingdom of Hungary. Between 1919 and 1939 Czechoslovakia included a fourth province, Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, with an area of 4,886 square miles.

Czechoslovakia is a mountainous land. Bohemia and northern Moravia are surrounded by the Bohemian massif; the Carpathian mountains from the western and northern boundaries of Slovakia. The highest peak, Mount Gerlach of Slovakia, rises to 8,737 feet. Owing to the country's mountainous nature, about 2 thirds of its territory is covered with valuable forests. Czechoslovakia is among the most heavily wooded lands in Europe.

Most of the rivers of Czechoslovakia are short. The Labe (Elbe) and Vltava (Moldau) drain most of Bohemia and flow northwest through Germany to the North Sea. The Danube River drains the rest of the country and flows south and east to the Black Sea. Its main tributaries are the Morava, the Váh, the Nitra and the Hron.

Czechoslovakia is rich in natural resources. Deposits of coal abound in Western Bohemia, Southern Moravia, and Slovakia. Northeastern

Moravia has iron ore. Other important deposits include uranium, graphite, manganese, lead, zinc, mercury, silver, and gold.

The fertile soil of Czechoslovakia is one of the major resources of the country. Almost half the land is arable, and the country's agriculture is highly diversified. Barley, wheat, rye, potatoes, and sugar beets are the basic food crops. Livestock breeding and dairying are also widespread.

Czechoslovakia's climate resembles that of southern Canada. Its three basic types of climate are: the western—oceanic; the eastern—continental; and the mountain type. The mean annual temperature ranges between 43° and 50° Fahrenheit, averaging 20° in January and 70° in July. Between about 20 to 40 inches of rain fall in the country each year. The lower mountain regions are influenced by mild western winds and considerable precipitation; they enjoy generally even temperatures. The Bohemian basin and the Moravian and Slovak lowlands have the continental climate—hot, dry summers and cold winters with northerly winds. The higher mountain areas, particularly in Slovakia, have short rainy summers and long cold winters.

Now, a separate look at the country's provinces. Bohemia, the westernmost province, is a plateau ringed by mountains. In the west of Bohemia the *Český Les* (Bohemian Forest) and in the northwest the Ore Mountains slope down from the frontiers toward the interior. The northwest Bohemian basin is one of the most highly developed economic regions of the country. It includes Plzen (Pilsen), with its heavy machinery, armaments, and brewing industries; Jáchymov's uranium ore deposits; lignite mines in Kladno, Most and Chomutov; and chemical industries and china factories. The famous resorts of Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) and Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad) nestle beside mineral springs.

Northeastern Bohemia is bounded by the *Lužické hory* (The Lusatian Mountains), the *Krkonoše* (The Giant Mountains), and the *Orlické hory* (The Orlice Mountains). The region is especially noted for its textile industry. Southeastern Bohemia is predominantly agricultural. The capital city of Prague is situated in central Bohemia, known for its industrial centers and highly developed agriculture (sugar beets, wheat, corn, hops). Bohemia's sugar refineries, breweries, and alcohol distilleries rank among the best of Europe.

Moravia lies in the middle of the country. It slopes from the mountains in the north and west to the valley of the Moravia River, where the most fertile lands are found. Moravia also possesses important natural resources and industries. The largest of these are: the Ostrava-Vítkovice-Třinec coal-mining and steelwork district;

textile and heavy industries in the Brno (Brünn) area; and the center of the country's extensive shoe industry.

Slovakia, the eastern region of the country, presents a striking contrast between forested mountainous areas and flatlands. The Carpathian Mountains rise gradually from the southwest to the northwest and north, reaching their highest peaks in the High Tatras. Then they gradually descend to the east and southeast, forming a natural border between Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Although Bohemia and Moravia had already seen considerable industrial development under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Slovakia was a neglected "hinterland" of Hungary. Genuine exploitation of its mineral deposits (iron, lignite, gold, and silver) and of its rich forests began only after World War I. Metallurgical, chemical, and timber industries were established. Heavy industries now exist in Dubnica, Povážska Bystrica, Martin, Podbrezová and Košice. The capital city of Slovakia, Bratislava, is directly connected with the Soviet Ural-Volga oil fields by petroleum pipelines.

All of Slovakia's rivers, except the Poprad and Dunajec, flow south into the Danube and Theiss. Except for the Danube, none are navigable. Southern Slovakia, a lowland, is an extension of the Small and Great Danubian plains of Hungary. In this area, the most fertile of the entire country, the principal crops are cereals, especially wheat and corn; sugar beets, wine, tobacco, and fruit are also abundantly cultivated. Arable soil, however, is scarce in the more elevated areas, where cattle-breeding predominates.

Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, formerly the smallest province of Czechoslovakia, lies at the base of the Eastern Carpathian Mountains. It is a largely mountainous region, dotted with many valleys that form a fertile lowland along the Theiss and its tributaries. It was neglected even more than Slovakia during the period of Hungarian rule. Agriculture provides the livelihood of most of the population. The farmers in the mountainous regions grow potatoes, barley, and oats, and raise cattle; those in the lowlands produce wheat, rye, wine, and fruit. A systematic industrialization of the region has been begun only since World War II.

II.

POPULATION

AT THE END of September, 1963, Czechoslovakia had 13,981,000 inhabitants—9,685,000 in the Czech provinces and 4,296,000 in Slovakia. (*Report of Central Committee of People's Control and Statistics*, November, 1963). This made the country's population the 10th largest in Europe. The population density per square mile was 303.7.

In 1962, the number of inhabitants of Czech nationality was 9,096,000 (66 per cent), of Slovak nationality 3,838,000 (28 per cent), the Ukrainian and Russian minority accounted for 55,000 people (0.4 per cent), the Polish minority some 67,000 (0.5 per cent), 537,000 inhabitants were of Hungarian nationality (3.9 per cent) and 140,000 of German nationality (1 per cent).

The country lost 3,250,000 inhabitants in 1945. About 2,500,000 Germans were transferred to Germany, following the Allied decision at the Potsdam Conference in July-August, 1945. And 750,000 inhabitants of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia were incorporated into the U.S.S.R. in 1945.

The first cities in Czechoslovakia were founded by the Czech and Hungarian kings in the 13th century. The principal cities today (population as of March 1, 1961) are:

Praha, or Prague (1,005,379), the country's capital as well as the political, administrative, cultural, and industrial center. One of the most picturesque and best-preserved medieval cities in Europe, is was once the capital of the Kingdom of Bohemia. The monumental Hradčany Castle and the Cathedral of St. Vitus dominate the city's spacious panorama.

Brno, or Brunn (314,235), the capital of Moravia and an important cultural and industrial (textile) center. The Špilberk Castle, once a notorious political prison, is the main landmark of the city.

Bratislava, or Pressburg (241,796), the capital of Slovakia. A significant cultural and industrial (chemical) metropolis, Bratislava is also the country's most important port on the Danube River. The skyline of its former royal castle resembles an inverted table.

Ostrava (234,222), one of the most important metallurgical centers in all Central Europe.

Plzen, or Pilsen (137,204), famous for its Škoda steel works and breweries.

Košice (79,352), an East Slovak cultural and industrial (metallurgical) metropolis.

Olomouc (70,071), a North Moravian cultural center and the archbishop's see.

Liberec, or Reichenberg (65,202), an important industrial (textile) center.

České Budějovice (63,946), an important industrial city.

Ústí nad Labem, or Aussig (63,876), well known for its chemical industry.

Hradec Králové (55,136), the East Bohemian cultural and industrial metropolis.

Gottwaldow, formerly Zlin (54,184), one of the largest centers of shoe industry in Central Europe, was founded by Thomas Bata.

Pardubice (52,536), known for its extensive chemical industry.

Havířov (50,629), a metallurgical center.

In addition, on March 1, 1961, Czechoslovakia had 33 cities with a population of 20,000-50,000 and 72 towns with between 10,000 and 20,000 inhabitants.

Užhorod, the capital city of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia and a cultural as well as industrial center, had about 43,000 inhabitants in 1956.

Czechoslovakia's ethnic structure underwent substantial alteration after World War II. The change resulted from the deportation of the Jews during the war, the transfer of the Germans, the incorporation of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia into the U.S.S.R., and the exchange of Magyars and Slovaks between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Today Czechs (66.2%) and Slovaks (28.0%) together represent 94.2% of the total population. The national minorities are: Magyars (3.1%),

Germans (1.2%), Poles (0.6%), Ukrainians and Russians (0.6%), and others (0.3%).

In religion, Czechoslovakia is predominantly Roman Catholic. Although Communist statistics are silent about the religious affiliations of the Czechoslovak people, the following estimate seems correct: Roman Catholic, 77%; Czechoslovak Church, 8%; Protestant denominations, 7%; Greek Orthodox, 0.5%; Jewish, 0.5%; others, or no confession, 7%.

Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was until 1945 a predominantly Greek Catholic province. After its incorporation into the Soviet Union, the Greek Catholics were compelled to join the Greek Orthodox Church. No statistics are available on religion in Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia under Soviet domination.

On March 1, 1961, the population of Czechoslovakia was engaged in the following occupational activities:

Industry, manufacturing, handicrafts	33.8%
Agriculture and forestry	19.3%
Construction	8.9%
Transportation and communications	6.1%
Public administration and justice	5.4%
Commerce	4.9%
Schools and culture	3.7%
Health and social welfare	2.0%
Communal services	1.4%
Economically inactive persons	14.5%

III.

HISTORY

ALTHOUGH Czechoslovakia achieved national independence only on October 28, 1918, the Czechs and the Slovaks have a centuries-old history. Their common Slav ancestors entered the Danubian basin during the great migrations in East Europe, in the middle of the 5th or at the beginning of the 6th century A.D. They settled on the left bank of the Danube River and along the Moravia. Under the leadership of the Frankish merchant, Samo, they established about A.D. 620 a state organization, which disintegrated after the death of Samo.

Little is known about the ancestors of the Czechs and the Slovaks during the next two centuries. Yet in that period they laid a solid basis for the Great Moravian Empire and the future Kingdom of Bohemia.

1. The Great Moravian Empire

In the first half of the 9th century the Nitrian Slovaks achieved prominence among several Moravian tribes. They were led by Prince Pribina, a protector of Christianity and supporter of Frankish cultural influence. The Moravian Prince Mojmir I rose against him, drove him out of Nitra, and united his Slav tribes in a new state, the Great Moravian Empire. Mojmir I never accepted the Christian faith and for a while managed to resist the pressure of the East Frankish Empire. Finally, in A.D. 846, he was deposed by the Frankish King, Louis the German. Mojmir was succeeded by his nephew, Prince Rastislav, who also tried to preserve Moravian independence, but was captured and died as a prisoner in Bavaria.

In A.D. 863 two missionaries from Byzantium, Constantine and Methodius (also known as Saints Cyril and Methodius), brought Christianity to the Moravians. They created a new Slavonic alphabet, the *Glagolitsa*, and translated liturgical writings into the Slav language. Their activity at once awakened the resentment of the German priests, who denounced them to Rome. The attitude of the Popes toward worship in the Slav language fluctuated between suppression and permission. Under Pope John VIII, Methodius won his case before the Papal tribunal, and Slav liturgy was again permitted, although with some limitations. After Methodius' death in 885, however, his disciples were forced to leave Great Moravia. The mission of Cyril and Methodius greatly influenced not only the Czechs and Slovaks, but the development of other Slav nations as well.

The struggle for power among the sons of Prince Svätopluk hastened the dissolution of the Great Moravian Empire. The German Emperor Arnulf with his Magyar allies joined the struggle, and by 906 the Empire no longer existed. The territory inhabited by the Slovaks became part of the newly created Kingdom of Hungary. The Slovaks lost their freedom, and an artificial boundary along the West Carpathian Mountains separated them from the Czechs. These events determined the course of Central European history for the next 1,000 years.

2. The Kingdom of Bohemia

Bohemia and Moravia now definitively entered the spiritual sphere of Rome. St. Wenceslas, murdered in 929, was the most prominent among the first reigning Czech princes.

Establishment of a national hierarchy and political independence was the main preoccupation of the Bohemian princes of the House of Přemysls in the 10th-13th centuries. The first step in Bohemia's emancipation from the German Empire was the foundation of the Prague Bishopric in 973. The second Bishop of Prague, St. Vojtěch (Adalbert), not only completed the conversion of Bohemia, but extended his apostolic mission to Poland as well. The Přemysls finally succeeded in stabilizing their position as independent kings and members of the College of Electors of the German Empire. Otakar I (1198-1230) was crowned King of Bohemia, and the royal title was confirmed as hereditary. His grandson, Otakar II (1253-1278), brought Bohemia to the height of its power and extended its territory from the Odra (Oder) River to the Adriatic; he was killed in an unsuccessful war against Rudolf I of Habsburg and the King of Hungary. The Přemysl dynasty ended with Wenceslas III (1305-1306).

During the reign of the Přemysls many Germans settled in Bohemia and Moravia. The German settlers contributed to the establishment of cities and mines, and to the development of craftsmanship; but they also complicated the future internal development of the kingdom.

The reign of Charles IV of the House of Luxemburg (1346-1378), who was also Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, is considered the Golden Age of Bohemia. In 1348 he founded the University of Prague, the first of its kind in Central Europe. His Golden Bull (1356) permanently established the kings of Bohemia as electors. Many famous castles and cathedrals were built during his time.

Religious wars erupted during the reign of Charles' successor, Wenceslas IV (1378-1419). Jan Hus, a renowned scholar and a popular preacher, tried to reform certain practices of the Roman Catholic Church. He was condemned by the Church Council at Constance as a heretic and burned at the stake in 1415. His followers launched a powerful religious and national movement, and a bitter civil war ensued.

The Kingdom of Bohemia under Sigismund's reign (1419-1437) was torn by deep political and religious crises. The Hussite movement split into two factions: the moderate Utraquists ("Praguers"), and the radical, more nationalist-minded Taborites. The Taborite faction, led by its outstanding military leader Jan Žižka, achieved important victories against Sigismund and compelled him in 1420 to sign the "Four Articles of Prague," the Magna Charta of the Hussite faith. But Sigismund and the Church mounted a new crusade against the Czech "heretics." In 1433 a civil war broke out between the two Hussite factions and ended with a crushing defeat of the Taborites in 1434. Both sides agreed to a compromise guaranteeing religious toleration. In 1436, the Utraquists returned to communion with the Roman Catholic Church and established Utraquism as the national religion of Bohemia. The struggle for religious freedom, however, was not over.

After two insignificant rulers, Albert II and Ladislav Posthumous, another strong figure, George of Poděbrady (1458-1471), ascended the Bohemian throne. Two of his successors, Vladislav II (1471-1516) and Louis II (1516-1526) came from the Polish House of the Jagellons. During the reign of the former, a personal union existed between Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary. The influence of the nobility increased rapidly, while the status of the peasantry sank to virtual serfdom. Louis II, who was less concerned with Bohemian than with Hungarian affairs, perished in a battle against the Turks.

Following the death of Louis II, the Bohemian nobles elected Archduke Ferdinand of Habsburg (1526-1564) as their king. Thus

began the Habsburg domination of Bohemia, which ended only in 1918.

Ferdinand's son Maximilian II (1564-1576) faced the rising power of a new Protestant movement, the Bohemian Brethren, who induced him to grant them and their allies, the Lutherans, equality with the Utraquists.

Catholic-Protestant relations reached a point of explosion during the reign of Rudolf II, who was both eccentric and incompetent. In his Letter of Majesty of 1609 he was compelled to grant far-reaching concessions to the nobility. When, in 1618, his successor Matthias (1612-1619) disregarded the Letter of Majesty in an issue involving Protestant churches, Bohemian noblemen revolted and threw three high royal officials out of the windows of the Hradčany Castle. They appointed a provisional government of 30 directors and declared that Matthias' son Ferdinand was deposed. In his place, they elected Frederick V (1619-1620), known as the "Winter King." The decisive clash between the two opposing camps took place in 1620 on the White Mountain. Frederick and his followers were defeated, and the Bohemian cities surrendered to Ferdinand II (1619-1637).

The Protestant revolt in Bohemia was an episode of the religious Thirty Years' War that swept over Europe between 1618 and 1648. In this war Bohemia paid an especially heavy price. Property of Protestants was confiscated, their preachers expelled. The persecution of the Protestants culminated in the execution of 26 of their leaders before Prague's City Hall in 1621. All nobles who refused to accept the Roman Catholic faith had to leave the country. In 1627 Ferdinand II formally declared Bohemia a Habsburg crown land. The Bohemian diet lost its legislative autonomy and was reduced to a consultative role. By 1628, as many as 36,000 Czech families had been compelled to emigrate from Bohemia; they were replaced by foreigners. Jesuits assumed a dominant role as close counsellors of the ruler, school administrators, and censors of books.

The Peace of Westphalia in 1648, ending the Thirty Years' War, brought further repression in Bohemia. Large numbers of German colonists poured into the country. The fate of the Czechs was forcible Germanization, ruthless taxation, national humiliation, and economic misery. In vain did the famous Czech leader and scholar Comenius appeal to European Protestant leaders for justice to his country and Church.

For the next 200 years Bohemia lay dormant under Habsburg rule. In 1749, Maria Theresa (1740-1780) suppressed the separate chancellery at Prague. She lost Silesia and depopulated Bohemia with her military expeditions. During her reign, however, the Jesuits were

suppressed. Her son and successor, Joseph II (1780-1790), an exponent of the Age of Enlightenment, freed the serfs and permitted freedom of worship, but rigorously pursued the country's Germanization.

The 19th century saw a rebirth of the Czech national spirit. A Congress of all the Slavic peoples of the Monarchy assembled in Prague in 1848, under the leadership of František Palacký. The main problem facing it was whether the Slavs should support federated Austria or work to hasten its dissolution. But the Congress never arrived at a decision—a revolt against the Habsburgs broke out in Prague and was followed by armed uprisings in Slovakia and Hungary.

While this revolt was put down, the struggle for independence went on. Emperor Francis Joseph (1848-1916) answered his subjects' demands for democracy with constitutional experiments and autocratic measures. In 1867, the Germans and the Magyars of the Monarchy reached a political compromise, the so-called *Ausgleich*. Hungary obtained equality with Austria, and the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary was created. The Czechs' hopes for restoration of their rights received a severe blow. After boycotting the Austrian Parliament for a time, they adopted a constructive program of action, summarized in two slogans—"Neo-Slavism" and "Expedience." The authors of the program and leaders of Czechoslovak nationalism were Dr. Karel Kramář and, especially, Thomas G. Masaryk. At the turn of the century it had become obvious that Austria and the Habsburgs had completely lost the loyalty of the Czech and Slovak peoples.

3. Slovakia and the Slovaks

Between the dissolution of the Great Moravian Empire at the beginning of the 10th century and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918, the history of Slovakia was inseparably connected with that of Hungary. Slovakia was a part of Hungary, and the Slovaks were deprived of their national freedom and independence. Slovakia played a distinctive role, however, particularly during the Tartar invasion of Hungary in the mid-13th century and during the Turkish occupation of central Hungary in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The Kingdom of Hungary was a multi-national feudal state. After the Magyars, its main national groups were Slavs, Romanians, Germans, and Jews. All nationalities received equal treatment until the Magyars rose to a dominant position early in the 18th century. Class divisions were very sharp, especially during the Middle Ages, when the peasants suffered from extreme poverty. Having no aristocracy of their own, the Slovaks were deprived of practically all rights.

The Tartar invasion of Hungary revealed both the strategic and economic importance of Slovakia. In the second half of the 13th century, the Hungarian kings conferred special rights on the German settlers in Slovakia, especially in the "mining towns."

In the first half of the 15th century, Czech Hussite warriors penetrated into Slovakia to help the disunited Hungarian nobility fight for the Crown of Hungary. Many Czechs remained in Slovakia as settlers, thus renewing the bonds of common language and culture between Czechs and Slovaks.

Following the Turkish invasion and the defeat of the Hungarian forces at Mohács in 1526, Hungary split into three parts. Slovakia remained under Habsburg rule and became the center of the political, cultural, and economic life of the Kingdom of Hungary. Bratislava was made capital of Hungary, and in 1467 became the site of the first university in Hungary, the *Academia Istrapolitana*.

In the 16th century, the Lutheran religious reformation spread into Slovakia. The Germans in the towns, the nobles, and the common people flocked to the banner of the new faith. The struggle for religious freedom became the main feature of Slovakia's history from the 16th to the 18th centuries.

In response to anti-Protestant legislation, in 1549 five cities of North Hungary drafted a Confession of Faith, in an attempt to formulate freedom of religion for the Protestants. But the Roman Catholic Church continued its persecution of the Protestants, whose stand gave a new emphasis to national languages as well as to political and social rights. The Protestant nobles organized several military campaigns against the Habsburgs; agreements on religious peace were concluded and broken again. Religious uprisings and conspiracies, such as those by Count Vesselényi in the second half of the 16th century or by Count Rákóczy II, were frequent.

The re-Catholization of Slovakia, however, went on inexorably. Peter Cardinal Pázmány, who established in 1635 a Jesuit University in Trnava, was a towering figure in the Catholic drive and the author of severe anti-Protestant decrees. The Protestants were deprived of their churches and schools; many of their leaders were executed. It was only in 1781 that Emperor Joseph II eased their plight by issuing the Edict of Tolerance.

Although Slovakia had escaped Turkish occupation, its population, except for the privileged class, was doomed to poverty and inequality. The tax burden rested on the shoulders of the peasantry. The first important reforms in Slovakia, inspired by the ideas of the natural rights of man, came in the 18th century.

In making German the official language of the Austrian Monarchy, in 1784, Joseph II awoke violent resentment among the non-German nationalities, especially the Magyars. They began to claim for themselves the leading position in the country and set out to denationalize the non-Magyar groups, thus creating dissatisfaction and tensions.

The 19th century saw the birth and steady growth of the Slovak national revival. In 1842 the Slovaks presented a petition to the emperor concerning their rights to a national language and culture. In order to put an end to the damaging cultural dissensions among the Slovaks themselves on the question of literary language, Ľudovít Štúr introduced a new Slovak vernacular language, which strengthened the Slovak position in the struggle against the Magyars.

During the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-1849, the Slovaks and other non-Magyar nationalities demanded national and territorial autonomy within the framework of Hungary. A petition called "Demands of the Slovak Nation," the first Slovak political program, was adopted. The Hungarian government answered by declaring martial law and initiating criminal proceedings against the authors of the Demands. The Slovak leaders then cast their fortune with the Austrians and mounted an armed insurrection against the Magyars. But the Austrians proved unreliable allies; after crushing the Hungarian Revolution they became wholly indifferent to the aspirations of the Slovaks.

Rebuffed by Vienna, the Slovaks once more turned to Budapest. In 1861 they adopted the "Memorandum of the Slovak Nation" and demanded equal rights with the other nationalities. The Hungarian government rejected these demands, pointing out that only citizens, not ethnic groups, were endowed with political rights. The only result of the Slovak efforts during this period was the establishment in 1863 of the *Matica Slovenská* (Slovak Academy).

The Austro-Hungarian settlement of 1867 led to a new deterioration of Slovak-Magyar relations. Hungarian was established as the exclusive official language. A new de-nationalization drive was launched against the Slovaks; their leaders were subjected to persecution, their schools and associations closed or disbanded. The last two decades of the Austro-Hungarian empire were more trying to the Slovaks than to any nationality in the kingdom.

4. Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia

In the 9th century Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was a possession of Bulgaria. The Magyars drove the Bulgarians out and opened the province for colonization by Ruthenians from Galicia. After the

Tartar invasion in the 13th century, Hungarian nobles settled in Ruthenia and introduced the feudal system. The rule of Hungarian absentee landlords reduced Ruthenia to one of the most backward regions in Europe.

Through centuries the Orthodox Church represented the only source of spiritual and cultural sustenance for the Ruthenians. In the 17th century the Orthodox Church in Ruthenia joined in a union with Rome and became the Ruthenian Uniate Church of the Eastern Rite. (After the Soviet seizure of the region in 1945, the Ruthenian Uniate Church was compelled to secede from Rome).

A national revival stirred Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia in the 19th century, but political oppression and social misery continued. Many Ruthenians emigrated to the United States, where they established organizations for the rehabilitation of their homeland. In 1920, Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was incorporated as an autonomous region of Czechoslovakia.

5. Czechoslovak Liberation Movement

Czechs and Slovaks welcomed the outbreak of World War I as an opportunity to remedy their intolerable conditions. In 1916, Thomas G. Masaryk, Eduard Beneš and Dr. Milan Štefánik, a Slovak, established in Paris the Czechoslovak National Council. The aim of the Council was to establish a Czechoslovak Republic, and its program was enthusiastically accepted by the Czech and Slovak peoples at home as well as by the Czechoslovak units fighting on the side of the Allies.

Masaryk and Beneš won the support of President Woodrow Wilson. The Allied governments gradually extended their recognition to the Czechoslovak National Council as a provisional Czechoslovak government. The Czechoslovak Republic was formally proclaimed in October, 1918, and Masaryk elected its first President. Czechoslovakia's independence was recognized by the Paris Peace Treaties of 1919 and 1920.

6. Czechoslovakia in 1918-1939

Between the World Wars, Czechoslovakia rapidly established a democratic society. It adopted a liberal constitution, similar to those of the United States and France. The people became the source of supreme power and elected their representatives by free, direct, and secret ballot. The President was elected by the Parliament; legislative,

and judicial powers were strictly separated. Justice was administered by independent judges. All privileges of sex, ancestry, or profession were abolished. National minorities were adequately represented in the Parliament, and their rights were enshrined in the legal system.

One of the most important tasks of the new republic was the liquidation of the remnants of the feudal system. In a sweeping land reform, the great estates of the former nobility and the Church were distributed to the peasants. A new monetary system was introduced. Rapid economic strides were made, and the living standard increased. The Czechoslovak working people enjoyed the benefits of one of the most progressive social-security and pension systems in Europe.

The young republic made impressive progress in the fields of education and science. These advances are especially evident in regions that had been culturally deprived in the past. Illiteracy in Slovakia, for instance, was reduced from 26.8 per cent in 1910 to 5.4 per cent in 1940.

Yet the country had its serious internal problems. Introduction of a centralized administrative system, without sufficient regard to Slovakia's particular interests, nourished Slovak discontent. A Slovak nationalist movement, whose main representative was the Reverend Andrej Hlinka, clamored for legislative and administrative autonomy for Slovakia. Autonomy for Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia also came late—only in the turbulent post-Munich era.

Abroad, Czechoslovakia was faced with Hungarian demands for the return of parts of Slovakia. To protect itself against Hungary, Czechoslovakia formed the "Little Entente" with Yugoslavia and Romania. The rising shadow of Nazi Germany compelled Czechoslovakia to increase its armaments, erect expensive frontier fortifications, and to conclude in 1935, in co-operation with its French Ally, a mutual security pact with the U.S.S.R. In the course of these events, President Masaryk resigned because of his advanced age, and Beneš became the new president.

The crisis came when Hitler denounced Czechoslovakia for "oppressing" the Sudeten German minority and demanded that the region be ceded to Germany. The Czechoslovaks retorted that Germany had no legal claims to the Sudetenland. In September, 1938, the prime ministers of Britain, France and Italy bowed to Hitler's war threats and agreed to surrender the Sudetenland to Germany. The Munich Four-Power Agreement shattered Czechoslovakia's democratic system and created profound disillusionment with the West. In the following month Slovak separatists divorced Slovakia from the republic and introduced a pro-fascist political system. In March, 1939, Hitler

made Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia a German protectorate and gave Slovakia nominal "independence." Hungary occupied Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia. Thus Czechoslovakia ceased to exist as an independent state.

7. The Nazi Occupation

The German occupation of Czech territory between 1939 and 1945 surpassed in brutality all that the Czechoslovak people had experienced in their history. The German Reich Protector assumed supreme authority and ruled with a mailed fist. The omnipresent Gestapo suffused the entire country with terror. Czech political and cultural leaders were imprisoned or executed. Tens of thousands of German colonists swarmed into Czechoslovakia and took over all leading positions in the administration and economy, which became entirely subjected to the German war machine. German was made the official language, Czech universities were closed.

Nazi terror was directed primarily against the Czechoslovak underground and against students and Jews. In 1941, Protector Constantin von Neurath, a relatively moderate diplomat, was replaced by Reinhard Heydrich, a merciless Gestapo leader. Heydrich's mission was to crush Czech resistance. Under his rule, not a single day passed without mass executions of Czech patriots. In 1942, Heydrich was mortally wounded by two members of the Czechoslovak Army abroad, who had been parachuted into Bohemia. In retaliation, the Nazis executed hundreds of Czechs and razed the town of Lidice to the ground, destroying its entire male population.

The years of brutal terror, however, did not eradicate the Czech fighting spirit. While a strong Czech resistance movement harassed the Germans within the country, a Czechoslovak government was formed in London under Beneš and recognized by the Allies.

During World War II, the conditions were less harsh in Slovakia, a vassal state of the Third Reich under a native totalitarian regime. The Germans tried to impose their system and an especially virulent anti-semitism, by means other than direct terror. Yet the Slovak people never accepted Nazism. In 1944 an armed uprising erupted in Slovakia against the Nazis and the Slovak regime.

In April, 1944, Soviet forces entered Czechoslovakia. They were accompanied by the Czechoslovak coalition government.

8. Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1948

At the end of World War II the Czechoslovak people had not yet forgotten the surrender of the West at Munich. They tried to secure a democratic and independent Czechoslovakia, through a genuine

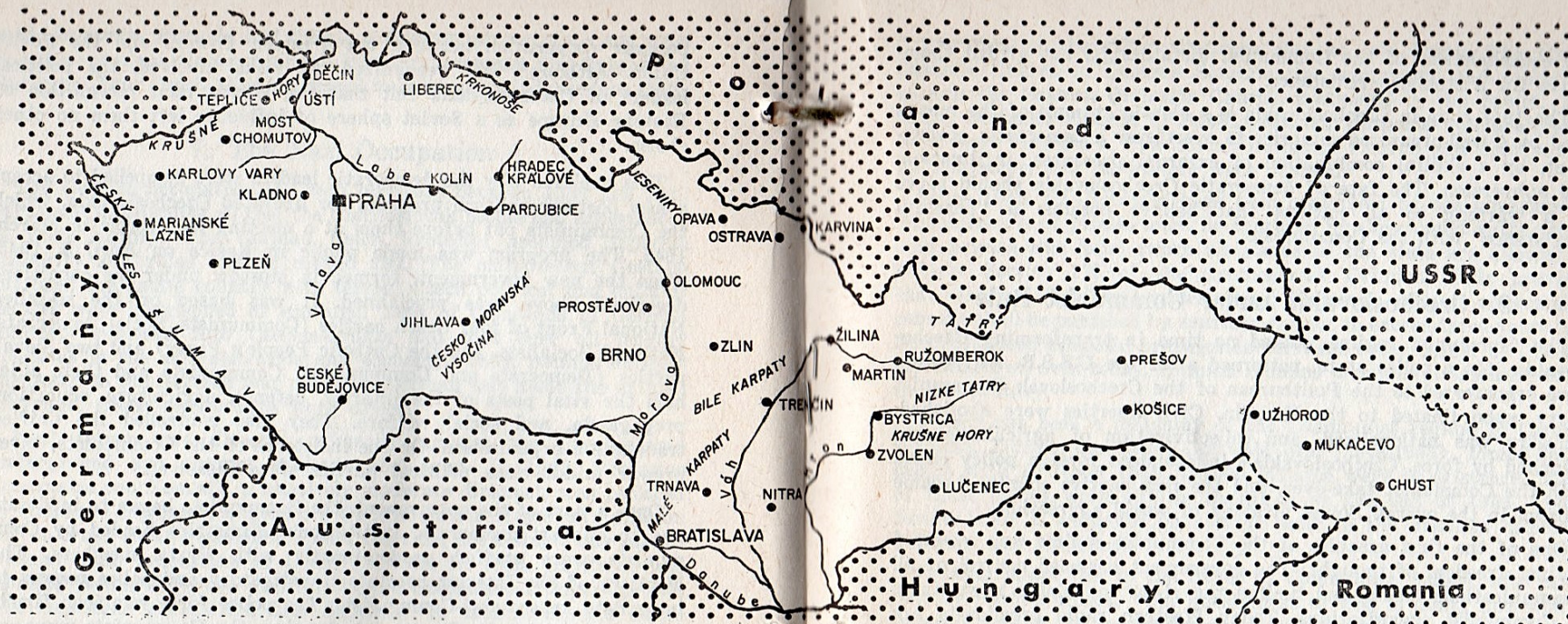
postwar cooperation between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union. Although they recognized the risks involved, the political leaders of Czechoslovakia felt that the West's tacit recognition of Eastern Europe as a Soviet sphere of influence left them no other choice.

This explains why the democratic leaders were compelled to accept a new postwar political program for liberated Czechoslovakia, which the Communists put before them at a meeting in Moscow in March, 1945. The program was made public in Košice on April 5, 1945, when the new government, formed in Moscow under the conditions described above, was proclaimed. It was based on the so-called National Front of four Czech parties (Communists, Social Democrats, National Socialists, and the Catholic People's Party) and two Slovak parties (Democrats and Communists). Communists and their allies held the vital posts of the interior, defense, agriculture, education, propaganda, and social welfare. They also controlled the unified trade-union organization. On the insistence of the Communists, three prewar middle-class political parties were dissolved.

Once a part of the government, the Communists began to infiltrate and to subvert democratic institutions. Ministries headed by Communists were staffed predominantly with Party members. The Ministry of the Interior used its investigatory and police powers to intimidate known anti-Communists. The police force was soon firmly in Communist hands. By careful planning, the Communists managed to convert formerly free associations into Communist mass organizations. The presence of the Red Army helped the local Communists to suppress any popular opposition to their excesses.

In the first postwar elections, held in May 1946, the Communists polled 38 per cent of the total vote—lower than their expectations. In Slovakia the anti-Communists Slovak Democrats won a remarkable victory. The democratic forces hoped that the West would now take measures to counter-balance the Soviet pressures.

In July, 1947, Stalin forced the Czechoslovak government to withdraw its participation in negotiations concerning the Marshall Plan, and to refrain from signing a treaty of alliance with France. Adverse reaction to this Soviet interference in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs, as well as to the policies and excesses of the local Communists, led to a decline in Communist popularity. Additional Communist provocations further increased the tensions. In September, 1947, a Communist-instigated assassination attempt against three non-Communist ministers shocked the Czechoslovak people. But in the following month the Communists engineered a violent political crisis in Slovakia and prevented the Parliament from adopting a new constitution.



* Dotted line: the border of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, seized by the U.S.S.R. in 1944.

The actual crisis began early in 1948, when the Communist minister of the interior, contrary to the National Security Act of 1947, filled the top ranks of the police with Communists. The Cabinet directed him to reinstate the dismissed non-Communist police officers and ordered a special inquiry into the organization of the security police. The Communists ignored this majority decision and called, instead, for mass meetings of their front organizations in Prague on February 22. Their purpose was to concentrate in the capital city masses of armed civilians obedient to Communist orders, and to create the impression of "popular demonstrations" in support of Communist actions. The Minister of the Interior also transferred several police regiments led by reliable Communist officers to Prague.

On February 19, Valerian A. Zorin, the former Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia and then Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, arrived in Prague to take personal charge of the coup. The next day the 12 non-Communists cabinet members resigned in protest against the failure of the minister of the interior to comply with the cabinet's directives. Their purpose was to force a reorganization of the government. The Communists immediately denounced the resignations as

a prelude to a "reactionary putsch." They seized the broadcasting stations, mainly to prevent the democratic leaders from addressing the nation. Communist-led action committees sprang up overnight in factories, offices, schools, and civic organizations. Armed Communist security police and the "workers' militia" raided the offices of the non-Communist parties and crushed any appearance of the opposition.

On February 25, President Beneš desirous to avert a civil war, accepted an ultimatum delivered by Prime Minister Gottwald, head of the Communist Party. He accepted the resignation of the 12 non-Communist ministers and approved a new list composed exclusively of Communists and fellow-travelers. The parliament, from which almost one third of the democratic members were illegally expelled, approved the appointment of the new government.

To complete their triumph, the Communists destroyed the opposition parties, suppressed their newspapers, and arrested those leaders who had not managed to escape abroad. President Beneš refused to sign a new constitution and resigned; he died on September 3, 1948. The overwhelming majority of the Czechoslovak people never supported

the establishment of the Communist dictatorship, but girded themselves for a stubborn resistance.

The 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia is a classic example of the means used by a well-organized minority to overthrow a democratic government, by a skillful combination of external pressures, infiltration, and subversion. The fate of democratic Czechoslovakia should serve as a warning to all nations that believe possible a "peaceful coexistence" with the Communists.

9. Czechoslovakia under Communist Rule

The Communist regime wasted no time in transforming Czechoslovakia into a police state, patterned after the U.S.S.R. All powers were transferred to the Politbureau of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, subordinated to the Kremlin. Civil liberties were abolished. Industry was nationalized, and collectivization of agriculture was launched by force. Czechoslovakia's independent foreign policy ended with the Communist take-over, and the new captive country became a pawn in the overall Soviet strategy of world aggression.

One of the first assaults of the Communist regime was mounted against freedom of thought. The government assumed control of all communications media and limited the right to publish newspapers to Communist organizations. Today Western radio broadcasts are jammed, and listeners heavily punished. The Czechoslovak Communist Constitution (Chapter II, Art. 28, Para. 1) guarantees freedom of expression, but only "in harmony with the interests of the working people," i.e. the Communist Party. Criticism of the Communist state is considered an offense and is punished as such under section 81 of the Criminal Code.

The churches felt the full weight of spiritual oppression. Freedom of religion, although guaranteed in the Communist Constitution, was abolished. Roman Catholic bishops were removed from their offices: some were banished, others imprisoned. Several bishops, including Msgrs. Pavol Gojdic and Michal Buzalka, died in prison. All Roman Catholic religious orders were dissolved, their property confiscated, their members sent to prisons or to manual work. In 1958, the Austrian Roman Catholic News Agency estimated that 450-500 Czechoslovak priests were in prison. There has been little improvement since. The most famous prisoner, Archbishop Josef Beran, was released in July, 1963, but is still not allowed to perform his duties. Some bishops remain under direct or house arrest: Hlad, Skoupý, Zela and Vojtašák.*

* *Background to Czechoslovakia*, October, 1963, by Amnesty International, London.

The fate of the other Churches was no less harsh. The Greek Catholic Church in Eastern Slovakia was suppressed and compelled to join the Eastern Orthodox Church, controlled by the Soviet. The Greek Orthodox Church in Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia was dealt with even more ruthlessly. The Slovak Lutheran Church was deprived of its autonomy, and its leaders were deposed.

Since 1948, all Churches have been controlled by the government. Appointments of priests must be approved by Communist authorities; only priests who have sworn allegiance to the state are allowed to preach. Section 173 of the Czechoslovak Criminal Code provides that whoever "performs ecclesiastical functions without government consent shall be punished by confinement not to exceed three years..." State-financed atheistic propaganda pervades every corner of Czechoslovakia. Yet, even today, religion remains a powerful spiritual force in the country.

Terror has been a mainstay of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. During the Stalin-Gottwald era (1948-1953), forced labor camps with no fewer than 250,000 inmates were in existence. Many of these camps were still in operation at the end of 1963. Today forced labor is employed on a large scale in the uranium mines at Pribram and Jachymov.

Judicial power lies in the hands of Communist judges, who carry out the Party's orders. "The question as to who is guilty and who is innocent will in the end be decided by the Party, with the help of the National Security Organs," declared *Rudé Právo* on December 18, 1952. The General Prosecutor is the main authority on law, and even the Supreme Court cannot contradict him. The Penal Code provides that "enemies of the people" should be more severely punished than Communists for the same offenses, and that sabotage of any kind constitutes an act of treason. Torture and beatings, as the Communists have themselves admitted, have been used to extort "confessions" from prisoners. Although such practices have somewhat decreased in recent years, drugs that annihilate the will are now extensively used.

To maintain a semblance of democracy, especially for foreign observers, the Communist regime has regularly staged the farce of single-list elections. In the first of such typical totalitarian elections, held on May 30, 1948, the Communist Party allotted to itself 210 of the 300 seats in Parliament. After the elections of June 12, 1960, the regime announced that 9,059,838 Czechoslovaks (99.86% of the electorate) had cast votes for the single list prepared by the Communist Party on behalf of the "National Front." Of the 300 elected members of the National Assembly, 219 are Communists; 44 without party affiliation (actually Communists); and 37, members of the four other "parties" (in reality, Communist front groups).

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The Constitution of July 11, 1960, renamed the country the "Czechoslovak Socialist Republic." The democratic trappings of the Constitution, however, are belied by reality. The Politbureau of the Communist Party, not the working people, is the source of all power in Czechoslovakia.

The Communist Party itself is distinctly a minority group. Although it numbered 1,624,197 on July 1, 1963, most of its members have joined it for reasons of practical expediency. Their ideological unreliability is shown by the fact that since 1946 at least 900,000 Party members and candidates have been dropped from the Party or rejected for membership. Purges and struggles for power have continuously convulsed the Party. In December, 1952, for instance, eleven top Communists, including Rudolf Slansky, former secretary-general of the Party, and Vladimir Clementis, former foreign minister, were sentenced to death and hanged.

The ruling Communist minority faces the opposition of all the strata of the population: peasants, industrial workers, intellectuals, young people, and disillusioned Communists. This opposition has frequently taken the form of open manifestations against the regime. On June 1, 1953, for instance, workers of the Škoda plants in Plzen staged an anti-Communist and pro-Western uprising. At the end of April 1956, Czechoslovak writers and students demonstrated against the regime in Prague and Bratislava. And in summer, 1963, young people were sentenced to prison terms for anti-Communist demonstrations. Passive resistance and day-to-day sabotage of Communist political and economic efforts goes on without interruption. In their relentless struggle to recover their freedom, the Czechoslovak people are aided by their compatriots who could escape abroad and who there have formed organizations that work for the independence of their homeland.

The opposition of the Czechoslovak people has time and again compelled the regime to make tactical retreats. One such retreat was the slight "thaw" in Czechoslovakia after Stalin's death, which led to a slowdown of heavy industrialization and forced collectivization. The "thaw" was short-lived; after the Hungarian Revolution and, especially, after Novotny's accession to the Presidency in 1957, repressive policies were again fully enforced. But growing popular discontent forced Novotny to soften his rule. To prevent his own fall, he staged five purges in less than one year, beginning in autumn, 1962. Novotny's position was further worsened by the official admission in August, 1963, that Slansky and other Communist leaders had been executed on trumped-up charges. The end of the year 1963 finds the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia badly shaken by economic disrepair and by open demands of the intellectuals for cultural freedom.

IV.

CULTURE

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S spiritual and cultural heritage is fundamentally Western. Owing to their different political development, the Czechs, the Slovaks, and the Sub-Carpathian Ruthenians created their own literary languages and literatures. The Czechs and the Slovaks, however, shared a common vernacular until the mid-19th century.

1. Czech Literature

The beginnings of Czech literature rose from the missions of the brothers Constantine and Methodius, who brought to Moravia the first Slavic literary language and alphabet (later called the "Cyrillic"). They translated into Old Slavonic parts of the scriptures and the basic liturgical books. This literary tradition in Church Slavonic ended in the 11th century, with the establishment of Latin as the liturgical language in the Kingdom of Bohemia.

The earliest writings in Czech were legends, epics, chronicles, and religious pieces. An epic poem, *Alexandreis*, and the *Dalimil Chronicle* are the outstanding works of the early 14th century.

Czech literature was given a powerful impetus when the Charles University was established in Prague, in 1348. Emperor Charles IV himself also encouraged and supported scholarship and literary activities. Czech writing during the 14th century was characterized by richness of language and poetic skill, notably in the verse allegory *New Council* by Smil Flaška and in the sermons in prose by Tomáš Štítný.

The writings of Jan Hus (1369-1415) reflected the ferment of the early Renaissance and launched the Czech religious reformation.

Hus also contributed to the modernization of the Czech literary language. His philosophy had a lasting impact on Czech national thought.

The Hussite wars led to a temporary literary stagnation. But the period produced the mystic Peter Chelčický (1390-1460), whose ideas led to the foundation, in the mid-15th century, of the Union of Bohemian Brethren, which considerably influenced Czech literary life. One of the scholars and literary critics among the Bohemian Brethren, Jan Blahoslav (1523-1571), contributed a translation of the New Testament to the Czech Bible (the "Bible of Kralice"), a masterpiece of the Czech language.

The Czech defeat in the battle of the White Mountain in 1620 had disastrous consequences for Czech literature. Religious persecution, especially of the Bohemian Brethren, left the cultural life impoverished. In the darkness of the 17th century towers the figure of Jan Amos Komenský (1592-1670), better known as Comenius, the last bishop of the Bohemian Brethren. This founder of modern educational methods and philosopher of world renown was forced to spend most of his adult life as an exile in Poland and Holland. Many of his writings deal with questions of religious and political freedom. Two of his Catholic contemporaries also deserve mention: Bedrich Bridel (1619-1680) and the Jesuit historian Bohuslav Balbín (1621-1688).

The Czech national revival at the end of the 18th century saw its first beginnings in literature. Leading writers worked to rehabilitate the Czech language. Josef Dobrovsky (1753-1829), the founder of Czech literary criticism, was the first to codify the Czech literary language. The national revival reached its peak in the works of these four authors: Josef Jungmann (1773-1847), a linguist who greatly enriched the Czech literary language; Pavel Jozef Šafárik (1795-1861), a Slovak philologist, archeologist, and literary historian; Ján Kollár (1793-1852), a Slovak advocate of idealistic cultural Pan-Slavism; and František Palacký (1798-1876), author of the first modern Czech history.

Literary romanticism brought new life to Czech literature in the 19th century and created a wider interest in folklore. At one end of the spectrum of romantic poetry stands Karel Jaromír Erben (1811-1870), who combined, in his formally simple verse, a folklorist demonism with optimism. At the other end looms the contrasting figure of Karel Hynek Mácha (1810-1836), a poet of anxiety and despair, whose revolutionary role was recognized only after his death.

A reaction to the idealism and sentimentalism of the National Revival became apparent in the work of Karel Havlíček-Borovský (1821-1856), a poet and brilliant journalist. Božena Němcová (1820-

1862), the first Czech woman writer, laid the foundations for modern Czech prose.

The *Máj* literary group, which appeared in the second half of the 19th century, concerned itself largely with political and social problems. The poet and critic Jan Neruda (1834-1891) was the group's most eloquent spokesman—a voice often tinged with bitter irony. In another important development of that period, Czech literature branched out and followed its national and cosmopolitan paths. Writers who stressed the national element include Svatopluk Čech (1846-1908) and the historical novelists Alois Jirásek (1851-1930) and Zikmund Winter (1846-1912). Cosmopolitan tendencies prevail in Julius Zeyer (1841-1901) and Jaroslav Vrchlický (1835-1912), an important innovator.

At the turn of the century, new trends appeared. Critical realism predominated in the poetry of Josef Svatopluk Machar (1864-1942) and in the naturalist novels of Karel Matěj Čapek-Chod (1860-1927). Thomas G. Masaryk exerted great influence as a political and social critic. Modernism in poetry had as its main representatives the impressionist Antonín Sova (1864-1928) and Otakar Březina, the greatest of the Czech symbolists.

2. Slovak Literature

The first recorded Slovak text is in the book of Žilina of 1473. Slovak was established as a literary language, however, only in the mid-19th century.

Cultural contacts between Czechs and Slovaks led to the use of the Czech literary language in Slovakia, especially by Slovak Protestants. After the Thirty Years' War, for instance, many more literary works were produced in Slovakia than in the Kingdom of Bohemia.

An important event in Slovak literature was the publication of the Protestant *Hymn Book* by Jiří Třanowský in 1635. Other Slovak authors, among them the outstanding historian and geographer Matthias Bel, wrote and published in Latin. The two Slovak universities, in Bratislava and Trnava, were cosmopolitan institutions and contributed little to the development of Slovak letters themselves.

At the end of the 18th century Anton Bernolák (1762-1813), a Catholic priest, made the first serious effort to establish a Slovak literary language, using the Western Slovak dialect for his grammar and dictionary. Several leading writers published their books in Slovak: the poet Ján Hollý (1785-1849), and the prose writers Juro Fándly (1750-1849), and Jozef Ignác Bajza (1755-1836), among others. The Slovak Protestants, however, did not accept Bernolák's

language, and Slovakia's literature split into Czech and Western Slovak divisions.

The gradual expansion of the Slovak national revival hastened the ascendancy of the Slovak literary language over the Czech. In 1840, Ľudovít Štur (1815-1856), the most remarkable figure of 19th-century Slovakia, introduced a new Slovak literary language based on the Central Slovakian dialect. It was immediately accepted by both Catholics and Protestants. Several important poets composed works of enduring value in the new literary language: Andrej Sládkovič (1820-1862), Samo Chalúpka (1812-1883), Janko Král (1822-1876), and Ján Botto (1829-1881). Other *genres* also developed. Ján Chalúpka (1791-1871) and Ján Palárik (1822-1870) wrote plays. Martin Kukučín (1860-1928) was the first important realistic novelist. Elena Maróthy-Šoltészová (1855-1939), Božena Slančíková-Timrava (1867-1951), and Milo Urban (b. 1904) also wrote outstanding novels.

Poetry continued to occupy a central role in Slovak literature. Among the traditionalist poets, Svetozár Hurban-Vajanský (1847-1916) and Pavol Országh-Hviezdoslav (1848-1921) were outstanding. Modernists include the brilliant innovationist Ivan Krasko (1876-1958) and Janko Jesenský (1874-1945), and many others.

3. Sub-Carpathian Literature

The language of the Sub-Carpathian Ruthenians is one in a group of Ukrainian dialects. The patriotic poet Alexander Duchnovič was one of the leaders of the 19th-century Sub-Carpathian Ruthenian national revival; in 1853 he published a Russian grammar as the basis of a new literature. The important cultural Association of St. Basil the Great, founded in 1866 by Adolf Dobrjanskij, made a rich contribution to the cultural life of the region. Sub-Carpathian Ruthenian authors of prominence are: A. Mitrak, J. Stavroskij-Popradov, the historian I. Duliškovič, the poets E. Fencik and Alexander Pavlovič, the prose writers Teodor Zlockij, Anatolij Kralickij, I. Danilovič, Jurij Žatkovič and Jador Stripskij. After World War I their numbers were increased by Russian and Ukrainian exile writers.

4. Czech and Slovak Literature, 1918-1945

The arrival of national independence released new energies in the Czech and Slovak literatures, which developed along parallel lines. This was a period of vitality, ferment, and experimentation. Czechoslovak writers, no longer obliged to struggle for their country's freedom, produced works truly cosmopolitan in character.

Czechoslovak literature entered the stream of world letters with the picturesque novel, *The Good Soldier Schweik*, by Jaroslav Hašek (1883-1923), and with the visionary plays and novels of Karel Čapek (1890-1938). An especially rich crop of poets appeared: Vítězslav Nezval (1900-1958), František Halas (1901-1949), Josef Hora (1891-1945), Jaroslav Seifert (b. 1901), and others. Most members of this group belonged to the school of "pure poetry." The many prose writers of importance include: Vladislav Vančura (1891-1942), Ivan Olbracht (1882-1952), Jan Čep (b. 1902), and Egon Hostovský (b. 1908). The latter two elected to go into exile after the Communist coup and are now continuing their work in the West.

5. Literature under Communism

The Communist coup of 1948 forcibly removed Czechoslovak literature from the mainstream of Western culture. The Communist Party immediately established state control over the arts and declared the basically humanist tradition of Czechoslovak letters as inimical to the people. Marxism-Leninism became the only admissible philosophy, "socialist realism" the only aesthetic norm. Enforced conformity replaced creative exploration. Czechoslovak writers suffered from methodical "purges"—condemnations, and even imprisonment.

Writers who had placed some hopes in the Communist system were soon disabused. The depth and bitterness of their disillusionment is evident in the testament of the poet František Halas, written shortly before his tragic death in 1949. Some writers, such as Vítězslav Nezval, chose to submit, and offered their talents to the Party. Hacks and functionaries assumed controlling positions in Czechoslovak letters.

But the Party has been unable to turn Czechoslovak literature into a Communist catechism. Interesting works, deviating from the official formulas, have managed to slip past the censors, especially in periods of uncertainty or transition. Most Czechoslovak writers continue their struggle for cultural and political freedom, as their forbears have done in centuries past. The political ferment in 1962-1963, for instance, which forced the Novotný regime to make some limited concessions, was spearheaded by the Slovak writers.

6. Education

Education has played a pivotal role in Czech and Slovak history, as a weapon against political oppression and for the achievement of basic human rights. In independent Czechoslovakia, education was

based on the ideals of enlightened democracy. School attendance, between the ages of 6 and 14 years, was required by law.

Following the take-over of 1948, education was transformed into an instrument of Communist indoctrination. "The Socialist school demands from the teacher enthusiasm for the cause of socialism, class consciousness, pugnacious materialism . . .," declared *Pravda*, the official organ of the Slovak Communist Party, on January 8, 1958. The Russian language and Soviet methods of teaching have now been made obligatory in all schools. Class background, ideological reliability, activities in the Communist-controlled Czechoslovak Youth Federation—such factors determine the admission of youths to institutions of higher learning.

Today the educational "ladder" in Czechoslovakia has four main rungs: (1) compulsory elementary nine-year education; (2) secondary education, for children selected by local authorities; (3) technical education, for selected students in various technical schools and colleges; and (4) university education, for students who are rarely selected according to their abilities or inclinations. All education is free. Following the Soviet pattern, the XXI Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia decided on June 18-20, 1958, to establish a close link between Czechoslovak schools and "real life," i.e. economic production. This has meant between six and eight hours per week of compulsory "technical training" of students in factories and agricultural enterprises.

During the 1962-1963 scholastic year, Czechoslovakia had 12,581 elementary schools with 2,273,000 pupils and 92,918 teachers. Students in secondary school numbered 284,837; those in technical and vocational schools, 151,948. The four Czechoslovak universities (in Prague, Brno, Olomouc and Bratislava) reported a student registration of 85,564. Fifty additional institutions of higher learning were active, with 108 faculties and 8,667 scientific specialists.

The Kremlin has selected Czechoslovakia as one of its main training centers for international Communist functionaries. In 1961, over 2,700 youths from 80 countries (most of them from Asia, Africa, and Latin America) were following courses, strongly colored with political indoctrination, in the "University of November 17," set up for this express purpose in Prague. Select groups receive special training in "Marxism-Leninism," so as to prepare them for future political activity in their homelands. Their training is supervised by the Politbureau of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Some of these students have given up their studies and returned home, in protest against compulsory indoctrination and against ethnic and other "prejudices."

V.

ECONOMY

SINCE 1918, Czechoslovakia has experienced three distinct economic systems. Between 1918 and 1945, it had a free enterprise economy, combined with progressive labor laws. In a transitional period (1945-1948), the economic system was mixed, exhibiting features of the free and the "Socialist" systems. Since 1948, Czechoslovakia has lived under the Communist economy.

1. Industrial Production

Such an economy rests on the nationalization of every means of production and on economic planning by the state. Except for a small percentage of soil cultivated by farmers, private enterprise does not exist in Czechoslovakia. Private ownership is restricted to consumer goods, particularly personal and domestic articles, and to one-family dwellings and savings. The enterprises and the property of the middle class (small businessmen, artisans, and farmers), until 1945 the backbone of the population, have been either nationalized or collectivized. The state wields unlimited economic power. It owns all industries and farms, business organizations, and transportation media; it directs domestic and foreign trade; it fixes wages and prices; and it regulates production by economic planning.

Nationalization of the key industries in Czechoslovakia,—including mines, banks, and insurance companies—took place on October 24, 1945. The state took over the remaining industrial enterprises on April 28, 1948. Before the Communist take-over in 1948, Czechoslovakia was an economically and industrially highly developed country. Since that time, only the Slovak industry has shown substantial development. Industry in Bohemia and Moravia has remained essentially

unchanged, as evidenced, *inter alia*, by the condition of industrial machinery. About 35 per cent of all Czechoslovak machinery is between 10 and 20 years old, 24 per cent 20 years old or older. Only the rest (41 per cent) has been recently acquired.

A State Planning Office was established in 1949, to prepare economic plans and to guide production. Since that year three Five-Year economic plans have been introduced in Czechoslovakia. The first of these (1949-1953), the regime claimed, raised industrial production by 77 per cent over 1948. Mining, power, and agriculture, however, lagged far behind the plan.

The second Five-Year Plan (1956-1960) was intended to raise production of capital goods. According to official statistics (which cannot be verified), the plan called for a 50 per cent rise of gross industrial production above the 1955 level, and had achieved a 54.4 per cent rise in 1957. The industrial output of 1959 is alleged to have increased by about 11 per cent over 1958.

The third Plan (1961-1965), boasting an investment of 312,000,000 Kčs* (\$44,500,000), was supposed to maintain the current annual increase of production, particularly in the chemical industry and in engineering and metallurgy. But soon the plan began to resemble a "house of cards." As serious shortcomings kept accumulating, the Party decided in 1962 to scrap the plan. A transitional one-year plan, which assumed an increase of only one per cent in industrial output, was proclaimed for 1963; an official report on the first nine months of that year indicated that major targets were not being met. Five members of the Central Planning Commission were dismissed in June, 1963.

The 1962 production figures for Czechoslovakia's heavy industry are as follows:

Electricity (billion)	28.7
Steel (1,000 metric tons)	7,639
Oil (" " ")	170
Chemicals (" " ")	1,135.3
Coal (" " ")	92,400

* Kčs—the Czechoslovak crown, the country's monetary unit, consisting of 100 hellers. The monetary reform of June 1, 1953, established the value of the crown as equal to 0.123426 gram of pure gold. The official exchange rate has been set at 1.80 crowns for one Soviet ruble and 7.175 crowns for one U.S. dollar. The dollar rate, however, is doubled for hotel vouchers purchased by American tourists before their departure for Czechoslovakia. In 1962, 40 crowns could be obtained for \$1.00 on the Czechoslovak black market.

(Sources: *Rude Pravo*, January 23, 1963, for 1-2; *Statistical Yearbook of Czechoslovakia*, 1963, for 3-4. Coal includes hard coal, brown coal and lignite. Oil production for 1962 is estimated on the basis of that of 1961, which was 154,111 tons).

Czechoslovakia's industrial production during the calendar year 1960 was the following (1,000 metric tons):

Hard coal	26,200
Brown coal	55,500
Lignite	2,900
Coke	8,460
Iron ore	3,120
Pig iron	7,700
Crude steel	6,770
Crude oil	137
Rolled steel products	4,482
Cement	5,051
Paper	429
Sulphuric acid	553
Nitrogenous fertilizers	140
Phosphate fertilizers	147
Aluminium	16.2

In 1960 the textile industry produced 464,000 metres of cotton, 65,000 metres of silk, 67,000 metres of linen, and 46,000 metres of woollens. About 4,400,000 pairs of shoes were produced during the same year.

The foundation of Czechoslovakia's economy is the metallurgical industry. It forms the principal material basis for the expansion of the engineering industry, and for construction and transport. The increase in the metallurgical industry, however, has not covered all the needs of the national economy. The resulting imbalance is reflected in serious shortcomings in the gas and coal supply, in difficulties in delivery of raw materials, in snags in the transportation of finished products, and in the obsolete system of investments. The one-sided preference given to heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods production has led to shortages of such basic items as clothing, footwear, razor blades, needles, etc. The regime has attempted to justify these glaring defects by maintaining that individual interests must be subordinated to those of the community.

In 1948, the Communists promised that their economic system would make Czechoslovakia a land of milk and honey. Fifteen years

later, by their own admission, Czechoslovakia's economy is riddled with poor quality, waste, mismanagement, and indifference. Crowded apartments, queues at food stores, and an impenetrable web of bureaucracy—all these owe their origin to the Communist economic system.

Mass thefts in factories, warehouses, and on the fields are a daily occurrence. In the first half of 1962 alone, \$7,000,000 worth of products were stolen, while damages inflicted by the carelessness of workers amounted to \$5,500,000.

"Dogmatism has had an influence on our economic conditions," complained the trade union newspaper *Práca* in 1963. "It has affected people morally, making them apolitical, indifferent, sceptical, or passive..." If one replaces the word "dogmatism" with "communism," this is a most accurate evaluation.

2. Agriculture

Agriculture is, after industry, the most important economic and social element in Czechoslovakia; at the same time, it is the weakest link of the country's economy and a hotbed of problems for the regime.

Collectivization in Czechoslovakia began immediately after the coup in 1948. Farming communities were artificially divided into small, medium, and large groups of farmers, in order to fan class antagonism. Whenever persuasion failed to induce the farmer to join the cooperative, terror methods were applied. Recalcitrant farmers were subjected to criminal indictments and confiscation of property. The government organized special public and secret tribunals to break the resistance, and deported the condemned farmers to forced labor camps. In 1961, the Communists claimed, more than 87.4 per cent of the farmland was already in the "Socialist sector." Today the collectivization of Czechoslovakia is virtually complete.

Some basic statistics on Czechoslovakia's agriculture follow:

In 1958, the country had 258 machinery and tractor stations, with a total of 61,977 tractors and 5,066 grain combines.

In 1958, Czechoslovakia's highly developed timber industry had 4,348,000 hectares of forests at its disposal. Reforested areas covered 99,170 hectares, and in 1960, 12,500,000 cubic meters of timber were produced.

In 1960, the main crop harvest, in 1,000 metric tons, included: wheat and rye—2,386; barley, oats, and corn—3,374; potatoes—5,254; sugar beets—8,404.

On June 1, 1961, the 10,816 Unified Farmers Cooperatives comprised 1,307,000 persons working in agriculture, or about 40 per cent of the prewar agricultural labor force. The Socialist sector (cooperatives and state farms) embraced 87.4 per cent of the total land and 90.4 per cent of the arable soil. As for livestock, there were 4,390,000 head of cattle, 456,000 horses, 5,960,000 pigs, 646,000 sheep, 696,000 goats, and 28,200,000 poultry.

Behind these figures lies the story of the political and economic failure of collectivized agriculture in Czechoslovakia. The second Five-Year Plan provided for a 30 per cent increase in agricultural production. In 1956 and 1958, however, Czechoslovak agriculture lagged behind the 1939 level, both in land under cultivation and in output. In 1960, according to official statistics, Czechoslovak agriculture lacked 60,000 cows. Two consecutive bad harvests, in 1961 and 1962, compelled the government to import grain and meat on a large scale, and to pay for the imports with industrial products.

To cope with the worsening agricultural situation, the regime has tried various reforms, but with little success. One such short-lived reform was the merger of cooperatives; this had to be abandoned because of lack of barn space and resulting further decreases in production. Another failure was the ambitious effort to bring all cooperatives into financial balance and make their production profitable. The effort was doomed by the apathy of the farmers, who simply could not work up enthusiasm for higher production goals while receiving pittance wages.

A major source of discomfort for the regime is the "backyard" plots, cultivated privately with official permission. The farmers lavish far more attention on these plots than on their collective work duties; as a result, the tiny private plots outproduce the large cooperatives. At the beginning of 1963, the members of the cooperatives still had 370,000 cows in private ownership. The regime regards the "backyard" plots as a serious ideological nuisance and an obstacle to the cooperatives; their abolition is being seriously considered, even at risk of a further deterioration of production.

Agricultural production is also threatened by a constant decline of the labor force and by lack of interest in agricultural careers. Over 480,000 workers, for instance, left the cooperatives for industry between 1955 and 1960. In 1960, only 4.4 per cent of the agricultural workers were in the 15-20-year age bracket, while over 45 per cent were older than 50 years. Women are in the majority. Young people see no future in agriculture, and they flee the cooperatives. This systematic depopulation of the villages endangers the entire economic structure of the country. The situation is similar in the state farms, patterned after the Soviet *sovkhozes*, and in forestry.

Distribution of the Labor Force in 1960

Industry	2,286,000
Agriculture	1,468,000
Construction	501,000
Supply and trade	499,000
Transport	370,000
Administration, judiciary, etc.	229,000
Forestry	102,000
Total employed in "Socialist sector" of economy	6,059,000

3. The Budget and Foreign Trade

The 1961 budget of Czechoslovakia envisaged a revenue of 112,534,000,000 Kčs (86 per cent from the Socialist sector of economy, 10 per cent from direct taxes, and 4 per cent from other sources). The expenditures were set at 111,915,000,000 Kčs: 51 per cent for the national economy; 37.9 per cent for culture, health, and social services; 8.5 per cent for national defense and security; and 2.5 per cent for administration. The 1962 budget foresaw a revenue of 123,322,000,000 Kčs and expenditures of 123,201,000,000 Kčs.

Czechoslovakia's foreign trade in 1960 showed a favorable balance sheet: imports amounted to 13,072,000,000 Kčs (\$1,860,000,000) and exports to 13,892,000,000 Kčs (\$1,985,000,000). Two thirds of all Czechoslovak foreign trade was transacted with the U.S.S.R. and its European satellites, while trade with the West came to less than 30 per cent of the total. Czechoslovakia's imports and exports in 1960 were the following:

	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
U.S.S.R.	4,538,000,000 Kčs	4,742,000,000 Kčs
East Germany	1,408,000,000 Kčs	1,427,000,000 Kčs
Poland	796,000,000 Kčs	924,000,000 Kčs

Czechoslovakia has been supplying the U.S.S.R. with essential products, including heavy machinery and munitions. Soviet Russia, moreover, obtains valuable Czechoslovak uranium ore without any compensation. Participation of the Soviet Union in Czechoslovak foreign trade increased from 31.9 per cent to 34.4 per cent between 1956 and 1960.

The bare statistics of Czechoslovak foreign trade create a false impression of an active and profitable exchange. In reality, however, the Soviet Union exploits Czechoslovakia by imposing discriminatory prices as compared to those current in Western Europe. In 1956, for instance, the Soviet Union sold wheat from the West at an average price of \$62.30 per metric ton. This discrepancy became even more pronounced in 1957, when Czechoslovakia paid the Soviet Union \$81.10 per metric ton of wheat, while the Soviet Union was paying the West only \$58.40 per metric ton.

Another form of Czechoslovakia's economic exploitation by the Soviet Union is its enforced participation in the building up of other European satellites and the Asian Communist regimes. Equally burdensome is Czechoslovakia's share in the Soviet economic penetration of the underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Czechoslovakia has been compelled to provide long-term credits, to supply entire plants, and to give scientific and technical assistance. All these activities represent a drain on Czechoslovakia's economy. When the United Arab Republic, for instance, exported to Czechoslovakia large quantities of cotton as payment for machinery, Czechoslovakia had no choice but to place the cotton on the international market, at a considerable loss. Cuba absorbs large quantities of Czechoslovak goods, under terms highly advantageous to Fidel Castro. No fewer than 762 Czechoslovak economic and technical experts were active in the underdeveloped countries in 1961.

The Communist state has a complete monopoly on foreign trade and operates through 18 import-export corporations.

Czechoslovakia's economy is increasingly influenced by the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), established by the Soviet Union to coordinate the economic policy and foreign trade of its satellites. One of the main aims of COMECON is to counteract the unprecedented success of the European Economic Community (Common Market). This is to be achieved by serial production, international specialization, and common planning, directed by the Soviets. The final goal of COMECON is complete economic integration of the countries of East-Central Europe under Soviet control. Czechoslovakia's new Seven-Year Plan, to be presented in 1964, is based on Czechoslovakia's inclusion in the so-called "international socialist division of production."

VI.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THE SOCIAL SYSTEM of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, of which Czechoslovakia had been a part until the end of World War I, was based upon social inequality and the concentration of wealth and land in the hands of a minority. The social policy of independent Czechoslovakia sought to eliminate the social differences between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The era of 1918-1938 was marked by the democratization of public life and the creation of an independent middle class. The living standard rose rapidly, and great progress was made toward satisfying the population's material and spiritual needs. This positive trend was temporarily halted, but not stopped, by the great economic depression in the early 30's which brought large-scale unemployment.

World War II subjected Czechoslovakia to economic chaos and destruction. Between 1945 and 1948, however, the country made rapid progress and almost attained its prewar prosperity. Several radical reforms were enacted during those years: nationalization of key industries, confiscation of the property of Nazi collaborators, and distribution of land-holdings of more than 50 hectares.

The establishment of the Communist regime in 1948 led to a deterioration of the social conditions of the Czechoslovak people, despite a further development in education, increases in production, and abolition of unemployment. Social prejudice and discrimination against so-called "class enemies" made a mockery of the regime's claim to have achieved "social justice." Czechoslovakia's middle class was destroyed, and the majority of the population was transformed into a gray proletarian mass.

The living standard in Czechoslovakia has declined as a result of Communist economic experimentation, excessive planning, and poli-

tically motivated foreign trade. A critical shortage of food, clothing, and footwear plagues the country. Eighteen years after the war, the Czechoslovak people must still spend long hours in queues to buy meat, butter, vegetables, and fruit. Coal and electricity shortages are common in the winter.

"People ask—and rightly," stated *Pravda* of Slovakia (June 18, 1961), "why they have to stand in long queues for potatoes, why so many cherries are left to rot on the trees and underneath them, why there are suddenly no onions, why there were difficulties in the fuel supply last year, why there is not enough meat and milk, children's clothing and building material, bed linen and paper napkins, refrigerators and furniture... One could go on in this vein for a long time..."

Owing to the discrepancy between wages and prices, the real income of the people has decreased. To make ends meet, all adult family members are forced to work. Although the official work week has 48 hours, the workers must participate in various so-called voluntary labor projects on Sundays and holidays. An average worker's wage comes to about 1,200 Kčs per month, or about \$170.00 at the official rate of exchange; the purchasing power of this sum, however, is considerably lower than the figure indicates. A Czechoslovak worker must put in six hours of work to purchase a pound of butter, 26 hours to buy a pair of shoes, and 130 hours to purchase a man's suit.

The Communist regime spends substantial amounts for medical care and social welfare. In 1956, the country had one doctor for every 715 inhabitants. In 1959, there were 231 hospitals with 101,359 beds, 501 tuberculosis sanatoria, and 118 other special medical institutions. It must be noted, however, that free Czechoslovakia had one of the most advanced health services in the world. This service has been slightly improved during the Communist era, especially in accident-prevention and in the reduction of occupational diseases. "Class enemies" are not permitted to enjoy the benefits of medical care and social welfare.

Ever since 1948, the housing shortage has been one of the most pressing problems. The shortage of building materials is compounded by negligence. Only 34.6 per cent of the planned new apartment units were completed in the first half of 1962, and 62.4 per cent in the second half—a total of 84,535 units. Allocation of apartments in the cities is in the hands of the Local National Committees, which give priority to Party members. Previous owners of the houses have either been dislodged or must share their apartments with other tenants. It is still common to have several people living in one room and several families to a flat.

Czechoslovakia today is a land of applications and waiting lists. At the end of 1961, 36,540 applications for telephone installation were on file in Prague's Telecommunication Office. One has to wait between 4 and 5 weeks for shoe repairs or suit cleaning, and six months to have an apartment painted. Such services are generally of poor quality and very expensive.

Purchase of automobiles is limited to Party officials, "Stakhanovites," and people who have actively contributed to the build-up of the regime. The down payment amounts to 18 months of the average wage.

Workers, women, and young men enjoy the special attention of the Communist regime and are said to be the privileged groups in Czechoslovakia. Yet in most respect their conditions have seriously deteriorated. The workers are subjected to tight Party control and exposed to countless pressures. The Czechoslovak trade unions, instead of protecting the interests of the workers, act as a governmental supervisory body to ensure the fulfilment of economic plans. The workers are forbidden to strike or otherwise express their dissatisfaction with prevailing conditions. They are not even allowed to change their jobs without permission of the "management," which is the Party and the local trade union organization.

Just as the regime has succeeded only in alienating the workers, so it has been unable to win the allegiance of the women or young people. Forceful indoctrination and low wages have generated antagonism in these groups. The number of working women has been steadily increasing, and at the beginning of 1963 they represented 43.5 per cent of the country's labor force. The percentage of women is even larger in agriculture, which requires hard manual labor. The wages of women are generally considerably lower than those of men.

Discrimination in wages, however, is not the main reason for the dissatisfaction of Czechoslovakia's women. Their chief complaint stems from their diminishing role in the life of the family. The increasing ratio of women with small children in the labor force is detrimental to the children's development and education. Of the employed women, 67 per cent have at least one child, 53 per cent have two children or more, and 43 per cent—three. The regime has been setting up public nurseries, maternity schools, and youth groups, but their number still lags far behind the actual need. The overwhelming majority of young people are bored with the Party's slogans, with Marxism-Leninism, and with state-organized activities.

For years the regime has repeatedly attacked religion and bourgeois (i.e. Christian) morality, and has spread double standards, hypocrisy, and cynicism. Today the results can be seen in a dissolution of social

obligations toward the community, a lowering of the morale of working people, and an unprecedented increase in alcoholism, in youth crime, and in premature marriages and divorces.

Czechoslovakia has thus recently acquired the dubious honor of being among the countries with the highest rate of consumption of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. In 1961, 2,743 traffic accidents, 16,720 criminal offenses, and 2,194 broken marriages were credited to an excessive consumption of alcohol. A special bill was enacted in 1962, providing that confirmed alcoholics must consult their physician, whenever their condition endangers the state or interferes with their work or family life, and must undergo institutional treatment as necessary. When alcoholics lose control of their addiction and cause hardship for their families, their wages are paid to their dependents.

Youth criminality was not a problem in pre-World War II Czechoslovakia, young trespassers representing only an insignificant portion of the criminal statistics. But today juvenile delinquency has reached serious proportions.

One of the most ominous trends has been the decrease of Czechoslovakia's population. Since 1950, the birth rate has been declining, especially in Bohemia and Moravia. In 1950, 288,000 children were born in Czechoslovakia, or 22.0 per 1,000. In 1961, this figure sank to 218,378, or 15.8 per 1,000, and in 1962, to 217,220, or 15.7 per 1,000. Meanwhile, the annual death rate was 126,376 in 1961, and 138,474 in 1962. In Prague and some other cities, there were actually more deaths than births, more abortions than deliveries. In 1962, one in three pregnant women in Bohemia and Moravia, and one in five in Slovakia, requested abortion.

The drop in the birth rate has resulted from the moral, economic, and social decline under the Communist regime, as well as from housing shortages and the unsuitable employment of women. One determining factor has also doubtless been the obviously higher standard of living of childless couples. In 1962 there were 16,500 divorces for 106,000 contracted marriages.

* * *

The achievements of which the Communist regime boasts pale into insignificance before the sacrifices made at the expense of the freedom, the basic human rights, and the living standard of the Czechoslovak people. But Czechoslovakia's history does not end with Communist rule, which is but one dark chapter in the country's turbulent history. Today the people of Czechoslovakia stand ready to accept any challenge in the great undertaking to restore their national freedom and political independence.

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